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Senate

The Senate met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JIM WEBB, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Virginia.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal Father, our shelter in the time of storm, bless the Senators who are preparing to leave and those who are coming. As we turn to a new chapter in our Nation's history, we ask for Your guidance. We need You to guide us through the labyrinthine seasons of history, for we are weak but You are mighty. Lord, guide us with Your faithful Hands, becoming for this great land our strength and shield. Strengthen our weakness, comfort us in trouble and distress, and empower us to fight the good fight of faith.

We pray in the Name of Him who is the way, the truth, and the life. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable JIM WEBB led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. INOUE).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, November 13, 2012.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable JIM WEBB, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Virginia, to perform the duties of the Chair.

DANIEL K. INOUE,
President pro tempore.

Mr. WEBB thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

SPORTSMEN'S ACT OF 2012—MOTION TO PROCEED—Resumed

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

WELCOME TO EVERYONE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, after our election, I welcome everyone back. For some it was a nice break. For others it was a lot of hard work. We welcome everyone back and look forward to a very productive next 6 weeks.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the Senate is considering the motion to proceed to S. 3525, the Sportsmen's Act, postcloture. At 5:30 p.m., there will be a rollcall vote on the motion to proceed to the legislation.

FACING GREAT CHALLENGES

Mr. REID. Mr. President, for the last year, the country has been focused on the difference between Republicans and Democrats. And for the last 2 years, this Congress has not accomplished nearly enough. But as we close the 112th Congress, it is time to focus on our shared goals and our common purpose.

We all agree, I hope, that today—now—great challenges face our country and this Congress. Those challenges are large—too large to be solved by Democrats alone. They are too large to be undertaken by Republicans alone. And they are too grave for us to allow political differences to stand in the way of success.

On the day Gerald Ford became President of the United States, at a time of great national turmoil, he said:

There is no way we can go forward except together and no way anybody can win except by serving the people's urgent needs. We cannot stand still or slip backwards. We must go forward now together.

So said Gerald Ford.

Mr. President, that is as true today as it was back then. Today the Amer-

ican people have many urgent needs. They need more jobs. They need economic certainty. They need opportunity and fairness.

It is within our power as a Congress to quickly address these urgent needs.

It is within our power to forge an agreement that will give economic certainty now to middle-class families who can least afford a tax hike.

It is within our power to forge an agreement that will ask the richest of the rich—the most fortunate among us—to pay a little extra to reduce the deficit and secure our economic future.

It is within our power to forge an agreement that will protect important tax deductions for families and businesses still struggling.

It is within our power to forge an agreement that will take a balanced approach to reduce spending.

In fact, we could avert the fiscal cliff for 98 percent of American families and 97 percent of small businesses today. The House must only consider the Senate-passed bill freezing tax rates for those making less than \$250,000 a year. This Congress is but one vote away from avoiding the fiscal cliff for middle-class families and small businesses.

As influential conservative Bill Kristol said this week:

Let's have a serious debate. . . . It won't kill the country if we raise taxes a little bit on millionaires. It really won't.

So said Bill Kristol.

So solutions are in our grasp. We only have to make the choice to pull together instead of pulling apart.

The hands of the Democratic Caucus are reaching toward our Republican friends, our Republican colleagues. I urge the Republicans to join us to do the difficult but necessary work that is ahead.

If there is a message to take away from this year's election, it is this: Americans are tired of the politics of

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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